

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning -- setting organizational goals and deciding how they will be met -- is essential for success in today's uncertain and resource-constrained environment. Strategic planning is an important function which should focus on program direction, expected results, and the desired impact to be derived. Much of what follows is drawn directly from the discussion of strategic planning in the *Evaluation Report*.

The process of developing strategic and implementation plans represents the principal mechanism for Sea Grant institutions in setting program direction, goals and objectives. Plans reflect policy and priorities. Therefore, it is essential that strategic planning have broad input and consensus from the program's major constituents (e.g., the public, advisory groups, university officials).

Each program will develop a plan addressing its long-range goals and objectives and how it expects to achieve them. The plan should be a "living document" to be revisited and updated. It should be specific as to resource needs, program management to meet those needs, and documentation of the roles and responsibilities of the program within that context.

The plan should concisely and succinctly describe the program's vision, focus, goals, and performance targets for the coming four-years. An institutional strategic plan, reflecting the best judgment of constituents and management, may include:

C	Brief History, Overview, Context	C	Specific Goals
C	Mission Statement		(programmatic,internal)
C	Planning Process	C	General Strategies
C	Value Statement	C	Resources Needed
C	Future Vision	C	Budget projections
		C	Evaluation, Review, Monitoring

It is expected that the preparation of effective strategic plans will be a learning experience for the entire Sea Grant network. The NSGO does not intend that all program strategic plans, conform to an identical format, but expects the planning process to shape program direction and performance. Strategic plans need not be lengthy or exhaustive. The NSGO will share with the Sea Grant network approaches to strategic planning that are considered effective¹.

The strategic planning process should be completed by the time of the PAT visit. During the preparation of an updated plan, drafts may be sent to NSGO for review and comment. Interaction with the NSGO Program Officer in the planning process is strongly encouraged. The

¹List of References for Strategic Planning:

Strategic Planning for Public and Non-Profit Organizations - John Bryson
Applied Strategic Planning - Goodstein, Nolan and Pfeiffer
Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan - J. Bryson and FK Alston
Future Search - Marvin Weisbord

updated strategic plan should be in place in time to guide planning the next four-year cycle. (See time line in Table 1, Appendix A). Strategic plans will be kept on file in the NSGO.